

Environmental Labeling Requirements in France

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1. Introduction

Over the last several years environmental labeling legislation in France has taken centre stage in the European Union.

In February 2020, France enacted law No 2020-105 on the fight against waste and on the circular economy. Article 62 of the law, essentially banned the use of the Green Dot on all packaged goods marketed in France and set penalties for non-compliance to this rule.

This law would have prevented companies operating in the different EU Member States from the ability to use a single strategy for packaging recycling and would have required the redesign of all packaging across the entire internal market exported to France or the production of separate packaging variants for the French market.

This was eventually overturned by France's Conseil d'État ("Council of State"), the highest court in France for legal issues and cases involving public administration. The final decision on the Green Dot labeling has not yet been finalized, however, the courts are expected to make their final verdict later this year.

France's Anti-Waste and Circular Economy Law, also established the requirements for manufacturers and importers of waste-generating products to notify French consumers of the recycling characteristics of 22 specific products.

Decree n°2021-835 from 29th June 2021, specified recycling (take-back) systems for 22 different product types that have to be developed as well as sorting information for each waste stream. This is supposed to help the French consumers sort their waste properly. Each system or sector will have an identified industry Producer Responsibility Organization (PRO) or eco-organization to help develop the specific signage and methods for recycling each specific product. The product will be phased in up till 2025.

Current products include:

1. batteries*
2. electrical and electronic equipment* (WEEE)
3. end-of-life vehicles*
4. household packaging
5. unused medicines
6. vehicle tires
7. writing paper
8. textiles and footwear
9. household chemicals
10. furniture
11. end-of-life boats
12. sharp self-administration medical devices used by patients
13. sports and leisure items

**Included under EU requirements*

The following additional products will be phased in over the next several years. From 2021 to 2025, 9 new EPR schemes will be added to the 13 existing ones:

1. building construction products and materials
2. commercial packaging*
3. toys
4. DIY and gardening items
5. motor oils
6. plastic-tipped tobacco products*
7. synthetic chewing gum
8. single-use sanitary textiles, including pre-soaked wipes*
9. fishing gear that contains plastics*

**Included under EU requirements*

In general, all 22 product types will eventually need to be labeled with France's recycling symbol- the Triman mark, as well as specific recycling information (Info-tri).

Additionally, France has also recently passed Decree 2022-748, published on April 29, 2022, which also relates to the environmental labeling of waste-generating products.

This decree affects all producers, importers and dealers, as well as all other marketers of waste-generating products that are intended for consumers. These include those using an online distribution channel (website, platform, etc.).

The decree came into effect on May 1, 2022. Environmental labeling requirements will come into force mostly depending on the size of a company. Products and packaging will enjoy a phased approach for existing stock until January 1, 2023.

The decree requires importers and producers to provide information on the following specific environmental qualities and characteristics of their products and/or packaging regarding:

- Reparability
- Sustainability
- Re-use possibilities
- Incorporation of recycled material
- Use of renewable resources
- Compostability
- Recyclability
- The presence of hazardous substances, precious metals or rare earth
- Traceability
- The presence of plastic microfibers

Products affected include textiles, clothing, footwear, electronic equipment, furnishings and passenger vehicles. As can be seen, there is a cross over with many of the TRIMAN mark product scopes.

2. Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Requirements

Every producer, distributor, and importer selling products in France that fall within an EPR scheme (e.g. [textiles](#), [packaging](#)) must register with a Producer Responsibility Organization (PRO)/ eco-organization relevant to the product categories they sell or distribute: i.e., Refashion for textiles and Citéo for household packaging.

- The recycling (take-back) systems for packaging have already released their sorting information guideline in 2021.
- The recycling (take-back) systems for WEEE, batteries and PV modules have as well published their sorting information guideline.
- The recycling (take-back) systems for textiles and footwear have also been published.

To be approved by the public authorities, future eco-organizations and individual systems must apply for the approval specifications for the sector that concerns them. This generally includes eco-design, collection, recycling and, when relevant, reuse and repair objectives. Accreditation is then issued by the public authorities for a maximum period of 6 years.

On January 1, 2022, five new EPR fractions were introduced: toys, sports and leisure articles, DIY and gardening articles, lubricants, and finally, products and materials from the construction sector. Decrees defining the scope of each fraction were already adopted last November. A month later, the government published the technical requirements for the participating schemes. The final step, the approval of these schemes, is expected in the first quarter of 2022.

The EPR sectors are special arrangements for organizing the prevention and management of waste, which concerns certain specific types of consumer products. They are based on the principle of extended producer responsibility, which states that those responsible for placing products on the market are responsible for ensuring the prevention and management of waste once the product has reached its end of life. This is also sometimes referred to as “cradle to grave” responsibility.

Article 541-10 of the French Environmental Code provides that all producers that are required to comply with EPR requirements must register with the French administrative authority (ADEME) and be assigned a unique identification number. The registration takes place on the SYDEREP platform (v1 or v2 depending on product categories.)

When registering, sellers will be required to comply with the relevant Producer Responsibility Organization (PRO) or to set up their own individual systems with equivalent requirements.

This registration guarantees membership in the eco-organization, or the implementation of an individual waste management system. It provides relevant data to monitor and determine the quantitative and qualitative objectives of waste prevention and waste management for that specific product sector.

In order to ensure the transparency of the governance of all these product sectors, the REP inter-sector Commission (CIFREP) was set up according to a participatory model made up of 5 colleges:

- producers,
- local authorities,
- associations,
- waste management operators,
- and State.

In addition, each eco-organization must now submit to a regular independent audit and the creation of a committee of stakeholders (producers, local authorities, environmental protection associations, and waste managers) called upon to give opinions.

3. Producer Responsibility Organisations (PRO) or Eco-Organisations

In France, the implementation of these product recycling requirements is carried out by PRO or eco-organizations, structures approved by the State, under private law (company, association, etc.), created and managed by producers, distributors, importers, who must now join. The missions of the eco-organizations or PROS, listed in their approval specifications, have been extended by the AGECL law so that their contributors (manufacturers, importers, e-commerce platforms), develop and promote:

- Eco-design (five-year plans subject to objectives, eco-modulation, etc.)
- Extending the life of products (information on the reparability of products, availability of spare parts, repair funds, etc.)
- Reuse, reuse, repair networks (reuse funds for financing solidarity structures, ban on the destruction of unsold non-food items, etc.)
- Aid for the development of waste management, collection, treatment and recycling.

The eco-organization or individual system must meet the objectives set by the specifications for eco-organizations or that for individual systems appended to the decrees laying down the specifications for eco-organizations and individual systems in the EPR sector of products which concerns him.

The administrative authority for examining applications for approval is made up of the ministers responsible for the environment and the economy, with whom the application file for approval must be submitted.

The individual system or the eco-organization can request support from ADEME (REP Sector Supervision Department) in carrying out studies and assessments prior to their approval, in accordance with Article R. 131-26-1.

In order to apply for approval, the organizations must compile a file taking into account their specificities and their products, including all the elements requested and demonstrating that they are able to meet the regulatory requirements. There is no "standard" file, and it is up to each producer or eco-organization to put together their own file.

The following organization (Table A) have been approved and setup to provide guidance on the proper disposal/recycling of their individual products:

Table A

Product	PRO/eco-organization	French Law
batteries*	Screlec Corepile	Articles R.543-124 à R.543-134 du Code de l'environnement
electrical and electronic equipment* (WEEE)	Ecologic	Article L541-10-2 du Code de l'environnement Articles R.543-171 à R.543-206 du Code de l'environnement
end-of-life vehicles*	Pas d'éco-organisme	Articles R.543-153 à R.543-171 du Code de l'environnement Article R.318-10 du Code de la route
household packaging	CITEO ADELPHE LÉKO	Articles L 541-1 et L541-10 à L541-10-18 du Code de l'environnement Articles R.543-42 à R.543-65 du Code de l'environnement
unused medicines	CYCLAMED	Décret n° 2009-718 du 17 juin 2009
vehicle tires	ALIAPUR AVPUR TDA ARTAG TDA PUNR	Article R543-158-1 du code de l'environnement Articles R. 543-137 à R. 543-152 du Code de l'environnement

	AFIP/GIE FRP	
writing paper	CITEO	Article L.541-10-1 du Code l'environnement Articles R543-207 à R543-213-1 du Code l'environnement
textiles and footwear	Refashion	Décret n° 2008-602 du 25 juin 2008 Article L.541-10-3 du Code de l'environnement Articles R.543-214 à R.543-224 du Code de l'environnement
Product	PRO	French Law
household chemicals	ECODDS APERPYRO ECOSYSTEM	Article L.541-10-4 du Code de l'environnement Décret n° 2012-13 du 4 janvier 2012
furniture	Eco-Mobilier Valdelia	Articles R543-240 à R543-256-1 du Code de l'Environnement
end-of-life boats	APER	Loi du 31 décembre 1903 Loi n° 2016 -816 Loi n° 2015-992 du 17 août 2015 relative à la transition énergétique pour la croissance verte (article 89). Décret n° 2016-1840 du 23 décembre 2016 relatif au recyclage et au traitement des déchets issus des bateaux et navires de plaisance ou de sport. Articles R543-297 à R543-305 du code de l'environnement
sharp self-administration medical devices used by patients	DASTRI	Articles L. 4211-2, R.1335-8-7 à R.1335-8-11 du code de la santé publique. Articles L541-10 à L541-10-17 du Code de l'environnement, Décret n° 2010-1263 du 22 octobre 2010 Décret n° 2011-763



		du 28 juin 2011 Décret n° 2021-1176 du 10 septembre 2021
sports and leisure items	Ecologic	NA
DIY and gardening items	Ecologic	NA
<i>*Included under EU requirements</i>		

4. Implementation Dates

France has approached the recycling and disposal of specific goods in a phased manner. Depending on when the products and eco-organizations have been approved, different timelines exist for their implementation.

Textiles

The “Info-tri” sorting information label is compulsory from 1 January 2022. From this date onwards and by 1 February 2023 at the latest (or 1 August 2023 for products manufactured or imported before 1 February 2023) the information must be affixed on all items of clothing, household linen and footwear.

Batteries

By December 15, 2022, all batteries had to be marked with the Triman logo and sorting instructions. From December 16, 2022, to June 15, 2023, there will be an additional period for stock clearance. From June 16, 2023, no batteries may be sold in France without the Triman logo and sorting instructions.

Electrical Goods

The Triman and the sorting information must be implemented by 15th December 2022. An additional transition period is being granted until 15th June 2023 for the disposal of stocks in France. The deadline to implement the labeling that refers to the packaging elements is postponed from 9th March 2023 to 15th June 2023 for all packaging produced or imported before 9th September 2022.

Packaging

In September 2021, the French packaging waste take-back schemes published new guidelines on how the Triman logo needs to be printed on packaging in France as of January 1, 2022. This is to ensure that a common format is used for the symbol and sorting advice. Although the requirement is in force, the compliance deadline for labeling is 15 December 2022. However, the deadline for exhausting stocks of packaging imported or manufactured before 9 November 2022 is now extended to 15 June 2023. The new format requires sorting advice, which can be in text (French!) or symbols, or both. If the products are not exclusively for the French market, the country code “FR” should also be applied.

Sports and Leisure

As of January 1, 2023, certain distributors will be required to take back used sports and leisure items (ASLs) from their customers. Guidelines are currently under development.

5. Labeling Requirements

The introduction of the TRIMAN Logo was first published in the French Official Gazette as the French Decree No 2014-15773 on 23 December 2014. It came into force on 1 January 2015.

The Decree requires all recyclable products which are subject to the Extended Producer Responsibility (REP) in France to display a unified signage marking, such as the common symbol required by the Decree (TRIMAN logo), to inform consumers about the need to deliver their products to a separate collection for recycling at the end of its life cycle.

Textiles

The Triman symbol is placed first

- A pictogram symbolizing one product category:
 - Clothing (t-shirt)
 - Household linen (folded towel)
 - Footwear (tied derby shoes)

It is possible to display just one product category or all three together.

- The self-deposit bank is symbolized by the pictogram of a container
- The URL link to the Ademe's website
- The letters FR specify that this measure is governed by French regulations.

Batteries and Electrical Goods

The sorting information for electrical goods consists of five elements.

1. The Triman symbol or the crossed-out bin.
2. The country code FR.
3. Description in French of the product concerned and the electrical or electronic items that are sold with the unit such as power cords, portable batteries, remote controls etc. (e.g. "This device [and its accessories and battery] are recyclable"). You can opt for a more detailed description like "This TV, its accessories, batteries and cords are recyclable".
4. The disposal options: small and large appliances have to be disposed of at different locations, which is reflected by different pictograms.
5. Additional information about collection points (mandatory) and repair options (optional).

Packaging

The French take-back schemes have decided not to release publicly the harmonized sorting information guidelines on their websites. Their intention is to avoid producers using these guidelines without being registered with a take-back scheme. If foreign producers wish to adjust their packaging according to the latest guidelines, they either need to register with a take-back scheme or contact their registered importer in France in order to receive the guidelines.

It is now prohibited to use mineral oils in the case of the product packaging. Banned oils are defined as those "containing substances which interfere with the recycling of packaging waste or which limit the use of recycled material because of the risks they pose to human health".

Sports and Leisure

On 12th February 2022, The Minister of the Ecological Transition and the Minister of Economy, Finances and Reliance published the following Order:

Order of 31 January 2022 approving an eco-organization of the extended responsibility sector of the producer of sporting and leisure articles.

This order indicates the approval of an eco-organization in the sector, with extended responsibility for the producer of sporting and leisure articles.

6. Triman and Info-tri Labeling

As stated earlier, all 22 product types will need to bear France's recycling symbol- the Triman mark, as well as specific recycling information (Info-tri).

Labeling will be slightly different for each product type depending on the characteristics of the products. Specific labeling guides are promoted by the various eco-organizations or PRO's. In general, the information needs to be displayed as follows:

- The symbol (including recycling information) directly on your products or packaging. However, printing the logo on manuals or documents that come with your products is also possible.
- The new format requires sorting advice, which can be in text (French!) or symbols, or both. If the products are not exclusively for the French market, the country code "FR" should also be applied.
- The Triman logo may never be smaller than 6mm. It must be printed in black and white, whereas the sorting advice can be either in colour or in black and white.
- Unique requirements for specific products will be required, each individual eco-organization should be consulted to identify the specific label requirements for their product.

The Tri-Man Mark



Info-tri Label

Example of a basic packaging label



Please note - specific labeling manuals for each product must be consulted in order to ensure compliance.

7. Environmental labeling required by Decree 2022-748 on environmental labeling of waste-generating products

France has compiled 10 new environmental labeling statements for a variety of product types, many of which overlap with the Extended Producer Responsibility requirements reviewed above.

It concerns all producers, importers and dealers, as well as all other marketers of waste-generating products intended for consumers. These include those using an online distribution channel (website, platform, etc.)

The decree came into effect on May 1, 2022. Environmental labeling requirements will come into force progressively, mostly depending on the size of a company. Products and packaging will have a phased-in disposal period for existing stock until January 1, 2023.

The decree concerns the obligation to provide information on the environmental qualities and characteristics of products and packaging (according to categories) on:

- Reparability
- Sustainability
- Re-use possibilities
- Incorporation of recycled material
- Use of renewable resources
- Compostability
- Recyclability
- The presence of hazardous substances, precious metals or rare earth
- Traceability
- The presence of plastic microfibers

Examples of required statements include:

- Textile products for clothing, footwear and household linen containing >50% synthetic fibres must be labeled with the statement - "releases plastic microfibers into the environment during washing"
- For electronic products consumer information on the presence of both rare earth and precious metals, with regard to the environmental impact of their extraction conditions, includes the following metals: gold, silver, platinum and palladium is required.
- For precious metals, the following statement is needed "This information is expressed in mass when it is greater than 1 milligram, either in the form of the statement "contains at least [X milligrams] of precious metals", or by indicating the detail of each metal. precious present, expressed in minimum mass in the same unit, in the form of the words "contains at least [X milligrams] of gold, silver, platinum, palladium".
- For rare earth metals the following statement is needed "This information is expressed in mass, when it is greater than 1 milligram, either in the form of the statement "contains at least [X milligrams] of rare earth", or by the indication of the detail of each earth. rare expressed in minimum mass in the same unit, in the form of the statement "contains at least [X milligrams] of scandium, yttrium, lanthanum, cerium, praseodymium, neodymium, promethium, samarium, europium, gadolinium, terbium, dysprosium, holmium, erbium, thulium, ytterbium, lutetium".
- Packaging has required statements on compostability, recycled content and recyclability.
- Products containing REACH identified hazardous substances in excess of 0.1% by weight: must state "contains a dangerous substance"

Specific statements for each environmental criteria are listed in the decree.

8. Sources

1. Triman Guide - [can be found here](#)
2. Triman Guide - [can be found here](#)
3. WEEE - [can be found here](#)
4. WEEE/Batteries/ Lamps/Extinguishers - [can be found here](#)
5. ADEME Labeling Guide - can be found (1) [here](#), (2) [here](#) and (3) [here](#)
6. Batteries - [can be found here](#)
7. Textiles/footwear - [can be found here](#)
8. Sports and leisure - [can be found here](#)
9. CITEO - [can be found here](#)
10. Textiles - can be found (1) [here](#) and (2) [here](#)

About The Author



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Jerry is a Senior Regulatory Consultant with 20 years of experience in regulatory and standards interpretation, spanning the fields of consumer products and environmental investigation.

At Compliance & Risks, Jerry performs international research and database creation for clients and acts as a subject matter expert on various laws and standards.

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